

OCCURRENCE OF THE SHEATH-TAILED BAT *TAPHOZOUS SACCOLAIMUS* IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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During the course of ecological work at Kapalga, N.T. (CSIRO Study area between South and West Alligator Rivers and north of the Arnhem Highway) two specimens of *Taphozous saccolaimus* were collected. This species has not previously been collected in the Northern Territory (Parker, 1973).

The first specimen was an adult female taken by Friend near Rookery Point (lat. 12 32'S, long. 132 23'E) on January 18, 1979. The left horn of the uterus contained an embryo with a dry weight, ex alcohol of 0.03 gms. The second specimen, also an adult female, was collected by Hertog and McKean on March 5, 1980 near the 'Mining Hut Lodge' (lat. 12 37'S, long. 132 18'E). It also contained an embryo in the left horn of the uterus which had a dry weight, ex alcohol of 2.6 gms. and measured:- forearm, 12.5mm; head and body length, 36.0 mm; tail vertebrae, 2.7 mm.

Measurements in millimetres and grams of the two specimens which are at present held in the Northern Territory are given, respectively, as follows:- total length-128.0; tail vertebrae 40.2, 32.6; forearm 80.0, 77.1; tibia 31.7, 29.2; hindfoot with claw 20.2, 17.4; ear length (from notch) 22.5, 22.1; ear breadth 17.5, 15.0; tragus length 6.5, 6.4; skull, greatest length 22.7, 26.6; condylocanine length 24.4, 23.6; braincase breadth 12.2, 11.7; braincase depth 10.9, 11.5; inter-orbital breadth 5.6, 6.2; zygomatic breadth 18.4, 17.3; post palatal length 11.2, 11.3; palatal breadth 11.7, 11.5; maxillary tooth row 12.1, 11.7, 11.5; lower jaw C - M3, 13.2, 12.9; weight -, 61.0.

Goodwin (1979) has shown that *Taphozous saccolaimus* Temminck and *Taphozous nudicluniatus* (De Vis) are best treated as

conspecific. As such, this species has an extremely wide distribution ranging from India to the Solomons. Apparently there is little geographic variation in the species, and it would seem (from Goodwin 1979) that even the subspecific separation of *nudicluniatus* of NE Queensland, New Guinea and the Solomons (Laurie and Hill, 1954) might be questioned. Our specimens differ from others in Australian collections in that their dorsal surface is predominantly blackish rather than brownish. However as fresh dry skins are decidedly rare in collections and as our N.T. sample is meagre it would be premature to describe a new subspecies. The species can be expected to occur in the tropical parts of Western Australia.

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